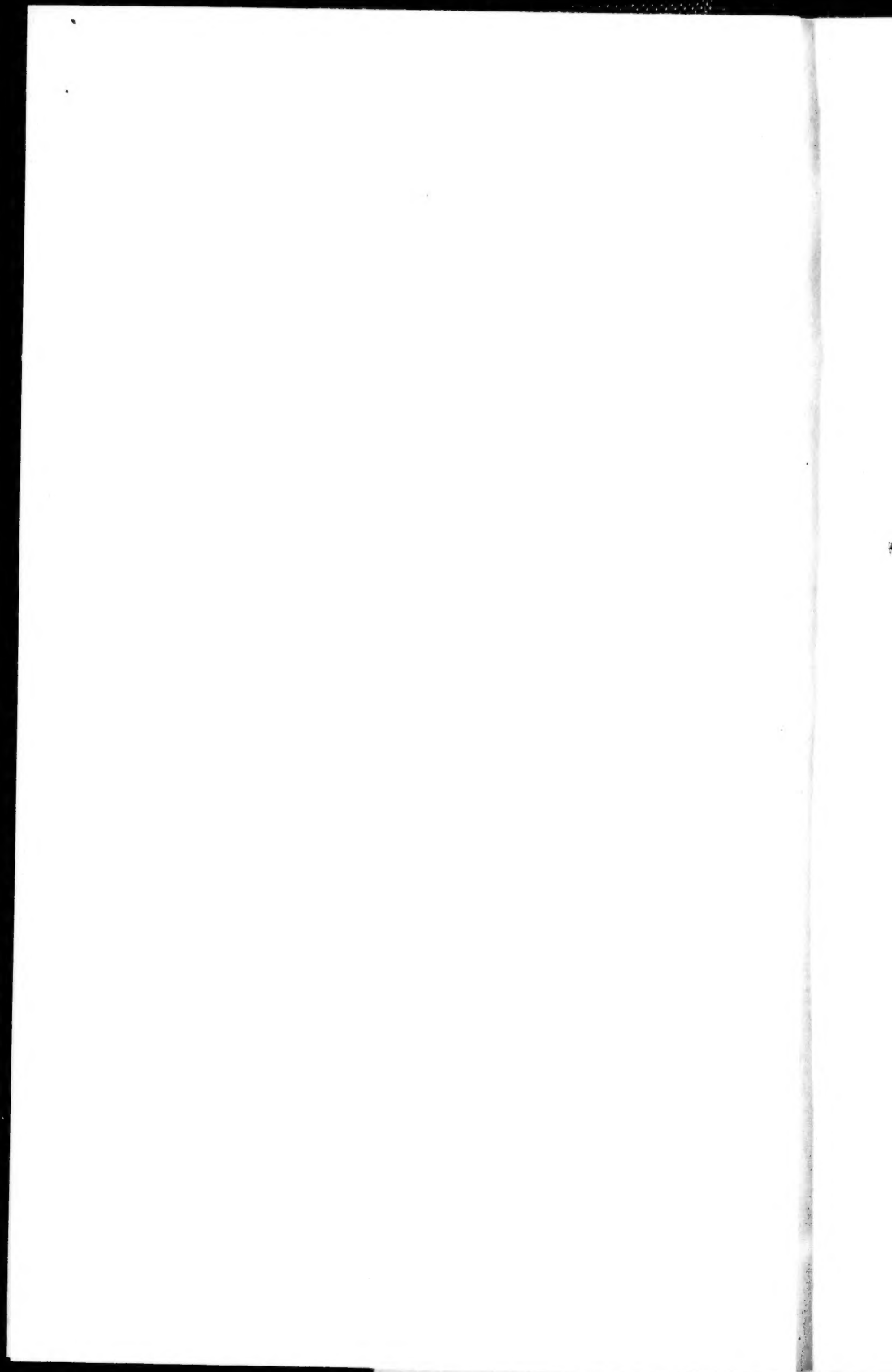
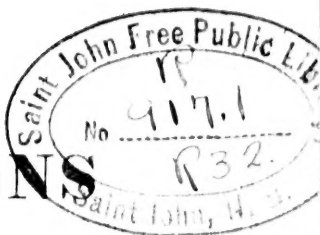




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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PROPOSED ALTERATION

OF THE

TIMBER-DUTIES,

WITH REMARKS ON THE PAMPHLET OF

SIR HOWARD DOUGLAS,

BY JOHN REVANS.

LONDON:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE writer of the annexed pages has been many years connected, by trade, with the Canadas, and has had the assistance of a brother long resident in those countries. His brother has travelled through the greater portion of these Colonies, with the express object of collecting facts relative to their productions, the habits of the people, &c. for the purposes of private trading. The writer, moreover, has received assistance from several friends, who have resided in the Canadas, and have been personally engaged in agriculture.



OBSERVATIONS,

&c. &c.

SECTION I.

THE Ministers have at length proposed an alteration of the timber-duties; and, as was to be expected, the same interests that have so long maintained the present mischievous system have now, when that system is about to be departed from, raised a long loud shout of disapprobation. The following observations will be an attempt to estimate the real worth of the proposed measure, and of the objections by which it has been so vehemently assailed.

By the existing law, what is called a protecting duty is levied on Baltic timber. Baltic timber is better in quality, and is cheaper, than colonial timber; but, in order to force the people of this country to buy the bad and dear commodity furnished by the North American Colonies, Parliament in its wisdom levies so high a duty on the importation of good and cheap timber from the Baltic, that the latter has, to a great extent, been excluded from the English market.* This proceeding is termed protecting the colonial timber-trade: and the consequence of the law, as regards the trade, has been to direct the capital of our colonies in North America to the preparing of timber for sale in the mother country. In other words, a timber-trade with the colonies

* *Table of Duties.*—The following is sufficient for the present purpose:

	B.	P.	A.	Foreign.
Timber, per load	£0	10	0....	£2 15 0
Plank, ditto	0	15	0....	4 0 0
Pipe Staves, per 100.....	0	8	0....	4 4 0
Deals, per 100, of 6 to 16 feet long, and 3½ inches thick.....	2	0	0....	19 0 0

has been created, which, without assistance, would never have existed.

The present Ministers propose to take away this assistance. They have determined to alter the relative proportion of the duties levied on foreign and colonial timber: in other words, they have determined to allow the community to buy, if they think fit, the good timber from the Baltic, at the same price they now give for the bad timber of America.

The effect of this change, as regards the course of trade, will be, it is asserted, a total annihilation of the colonial timber-trade. With some little restriction, this may be conceded. With some exceptions, the whole of the timber purchased by Great Britain will be obtained from the Baltic.

The grand point in debate between the supporters and opponents of the present proposed plan is, *whether the benefit which will be conferred on the community at large by the employment of a cheap and excellent commodity, be counterbalanced by any evils arising from the measure which confers the benefit: whether the alteration of the trade be attended by mischiefs greater than the good, which by all it is allowed to produce.*

The most simple and straight-forward course of discussing this question would evidently be, to place before the reader at once, and distinctly, the extent of benefit derived from the proposed change, and then to compare it with whatever evil may be proved to arise from the same source. But as the good will appear to be enormous, I might be accused of using an improper artifice, and of endeavouring to bias the mind of the English reader, if I pursued this obvious method; since, by possessing him with a strong conception of the benefit he was about to enjoy, he might be unfitted for the fair appreciation of whatever evidence may be adduced to prove mischief accruing to other portions of the whole community. In order, then, to avoid this charge of unfairness, I propose to reserve the statement of the advantages arising from the measure in question to the people of this country, till I have examined its effects on the other parties supposed to be affected by it.

SECTION II.

For the purposes of the present discussion, the community as a whole may be divided into three distinct parties. 1. The colonists. 2. The ship-owners. 3. The people of Great Britain, taken generally. I intend to inquire in the above order into the consequences of the proposed change to the various interests of these separate parties.

1. EFFECTS ON THE COLONIES.

It has already been stated, that the new plan of duties would annihilate the timber-trade: that England, in fact, would not buy bad timber. The necessary result of which would be, that the colonies would not prepare it; in other words, the capital now employed by the colonies, in the preparation of timber, would no longer be so employed. Two questions arise on this point: 1st. Is there any mode in which this capital of the colonies can be employed with equal advantage? and 2. Can the capital be easily transferred to the new application? If it can be shewn that there are other advantageous modes of employing capital in the colonies, and that without loss it can be transferred, then, as regards the colonies, the measure will be proved to be in no way injurious; and if, as I think, it can be made manifest, that the new modes of employing capital are much more advantageous than the old one, then the measure, so far from being injurious, will be one of absolute benefit. That it will be so beneficial, and that to an almost incalculable extent, I believe I shall be able satisfactorily to prove.

To those who are acquainted with the colonies of North America, it is well known that the chief business of the inhabitants is agriculture. They have a fertile soil, a climate well fitted to the production of agricultural produce, and their superiority, as compared with the countries of Europe, lies in their capability of furnishing this produce.

The Canadas, which are the great object of interest in this matter, have, it is well known, already employed a portion of their capital in the production of wheat for this country. This wheat has, even with a five-shilling duty, paid the producer;—it has, in other words, sold at a remunerating price; and I can assert, without fear of refutation, that the capital of the colonies can be employed in the production of wheat, not merely with advantage equal to that derived from its application to the production of timber, but with advantage, far surpassing any which that mischievous trade can possibly confer; that, speaking with reference merely to the riches of the country, the business of agriculture would be far more beneficial than lumbering, while, considering the happiness of the people as dependant on their health and habits of morality, no greater boon can be conferred on the colonies than the utter annihilation of the timber-trade.

The following observations of a person, who was, for many years, a resident in Canada, deserve particular attention:—

“ For benefit to arise to the community at large, *all* the capital employed in any trade should be replaced, and some-

thing over and above should accrue in the shape of profit. Moreover, this profit should be so acquired by the capitalist, that his prudent and economical habits should not be destroyed; and the labourer also employed by him should not, by that employment, be rendered a spendthrift and a vagabond.

"Though great profits may arise to certain individual adventurers in a particular trade, it by no means follows that the whole capital employed in that trade has been replaced, and profits obtained upon it. If we suppose the money expended in the purchase of lottery-tickets to be immediately destroyed, and the amount of the prize-tickets only to be recovered, it might, and always would happen, that while certain buyers obtained large returns for their money, an immense quantity of money would be irrecoverably destroyed. The hope of this extraordinary gain would be sufficient to entice thousands to venture, but a great loss would infallibly be sustained by the society at large.

"This supposed case is, in many points, analogous to that of adventures in the timber-trade."*

The same writer enters into a minute description of the causes of the precarious nature of the trade, and its pernicious effects on the habits and health of the labourer. His conclusions, founded, as I know, upon a long experience, are thus expressed:—

"No estimates have ever yet been made of the exact quantity (i. e. of timber) that is annually lost; all that we can do, therefore, is, to take the general opinion of the people of the country as evidence; and this opinion we can state to be that somewhat more than one-third of the timber annually rafted is annually wrecked on its passage to Quebec. This must, assuredly, diminish the benefit derived by the community from this trade." (p. 139.)

Speaking of the effects of the business on the habits of those employed in lumbering, he says, "these are just the circumstances to transform an honest, industrious, and thrifty citizen into a dishonest, lazy spendthrift, and the latter compound of qualities is almost invariably found in a *raftsman*." (p. 141.) In another passage he observes that one consequence of the business "is an almost invariable loss of health; no one ever yet saw an aged *raftsman*." (p. 140.) These are matters worthy the most serious consideration—matters which every one who ventures to guide the opinions of the legislature on this subject would do well to inquire into and understand. We hear persons assuming a high tone, addressing the government in a language of threatening and of warning, pretending to speak in a spirit of a far-sighted

* Westminster Review, No. 13.

and considerate legislation, but we never hear these persons bringing forward and estimating the necessary consequences of the proposed change upon the wealth, the health, and the morals of the people. A vague and general declamation is indulged in, sweeping assertions respecting commercial operations are constantly hazarded, but there is no detailed inquiry into the actual workings of the existing law as to the points which I here have brought forward. To all who know the country, that is, who know more than the mere outside of things, who have lived among the people, who have been made acquainted with their habits and manners by constant and familiar intercourse—to these men I fearlessly appeal for support to my assertion when I declare that the lumber-trade is carried on by the most vicious portion of the population; made and kept vicious by the very trade by which they live; and I am equally confident of their support when I say that the capital thus employed might, for the welfare of the colony, be far more advantageously employed in the business of agriculture. A friend has forwarded to me a letter, which he has just received from a Canadian seigneur, on the subject of the proposed duties, a paragraph from which I am permitted to copy. “I never politically blamed your opinion on the timber-trade of Canada. I knew it to be correct, and am certain that the present measure will tend to increase the internal prosperity of the country; but, speaking as a merchant, I think it will injure commerce, and greatly diminish the capital invested in that particular trade, from which, since no sale can be found for timber, no benefit can be derived. That has nothing to do, however, with the interior of the country. Wheat must ultimately be the staple article, and all great landed proprietors must rejoice at the present measure.”

In confirmation of this opinion, respecting the power of growing wheat, the following account may be properly here brought forward.

Wheat of an excellent quality can be sold at a remunerating price in the Canadian market, at one dollar per bushel, which the merchant can sell in Great Britain, paying a duty of five shillings per quarter, at about fifty-six shillings. This price would be given in the British market, seeing that wheat of an equal quality usually sells for something more.

Besides wheat, the North-American Colonies are capable of producing, at a remunerating price, the important articles of hemp and flax.* Some years since, an experiment was made, by persons employed by others, (the Government,

* Flax-seed has been an article of export for some years, and there are to be found in Canada sixteen descriptions of native hemp.

I believe,) to grow hemp, and, as all expected, it failed. But every one who has travelled in Canada knows that this failure was wholly attributable to the ignorance of those trying the experiment, and not to any incapability in the soil or climate. In Upper Canada, hemp, self-sown, may be seen growing around the barns and farm-yards, ten and twelve feet in height, growing in spite, and not in consequence, of care. And, in some late experiments, made by persons of agricultural skill, the success has been complete.

Added to hemp, flax, and wheat, is every sort of produce needed by the West Indies; and of this it may be remarked that the lumber which now goes to the West Indies, and, also, the agricultural produce needed, would be sold at a much lower remunerating price. The price of commodities, as far as price depends on cost of production, is determined by the sum expended to produce the last portion needed. In the case of timber, it is well known that, if only a small quantity were needed, the expenditure to obtain it would be diminished; that is, the cost of each individual stave, for example, or log of square timber, or hundred of deals, would be less than now, and, consequently, the price would be less. But, with respect to agricultural produce, the case is different. A greater demand would not induce a necessity to use inferior soils, the best soils being yet uncultivated; and, so long as this is the case, the more that is produced the greater is the ease with which the separate articles are produced, because the various articles of farm-produce aid each other; that is, it is not much more expensive often to produce two than one. A man who has one or two cows, can, without much expense, rear a pig; he who has corn to thresh, can, without expense, rear poultry, and so on. And, moreover, greater skill would soon be acquired, in consequence of undivided attention, and a steady market; and the application of capital in larger masses than is now practised would serve greatly to increase the facility of production. Thus, agricultural produce and lumber would both, with a profit as large as at present derived, be sold at a lower price.

From these various data, I think, then, that it may be safely asserted, that there is a new mode in which the capital of the colonies may be employed with advantage equal to that derived from applying it to the timber-trade: going even still farther, that, looking at the new mode, with the view of an enlightened statesman, no doubt can be entertained but that great and lasting benefit will be conferred on the colony by a measure which shall direct all its capital to agricultural pursuits.

To this statement a general contradiction has been given, in a late pamphlet, published by Sir Howard Douglas, late

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Governor of New Brunswick: which contradiction, as it comes from a person once high in office, is likely to have much weight with such portion of the public as takes an interest in the present subject.

Before proceeding to discuss some of the positions of Sir Howard Douglas, I must take leave to hazard a few observations on his supposed capability of judging respecting the effects of the proposed legislative alteration.

When a man has spent the chief part of his life in a military career, there is reason to believe that the greater part of his knowledge will be confined to the military profession. It may be presumed, until the contrary be shown, that he knows little of commerce, or of such portion of political science as is conversant about the national wealth; he may be presumed ignorant of the circumstances which determine the application of capital, and considered as incapable of judging of the effects of a legislative measure on that matter, as he would be of tracing out the consequences of the new law respecting Dower. The law is a science of which we may presume a soldier ignorant; so are the principles of trade: until some positive knowledge be proved, there is no reason to consider a soldier-governor a peculiarly good authority on matters of legislation. I mean no disrespect to Sir H. Douglas when I say that governors of our colonies are not chosen with reference to their abilities for governing; nor do I intend to cast blame on him, when I assert that, generally, they are exceedingly unfitted for the office: all that I desire is, that the public should not attach undue importance to the situation which this officer held. After having commanded, a certain number of years, a body of troops, an officer is despatched across the Atlantic, and suddenly converted into a governor. He lives at his government, surrounded by ignorant and interested persons, who impose upon and mislead him. Not fitted by previous education for the task he has undertaken, he takes his opinions on trust, and is usually deceived, both as to his facts and the conclusions he draws from them. He returns home, and, by foolish people, is deemed an oracle. He may, possibly, under such circumstances, publish a pamphlet, forgetting that the matters he is discussing are but particular cases under some general rule of a science, of which he is ignorant, and that, by crossing the sea, and living a few years abroad, he has not become a legislator.

Sir Howard Douglas has, it appears, a profound contempt for all political economists; and, because some persons, deemed belonging to that much-abused class of philosophers, have declared colonies to be unnecessary, thinks it requisite to connect the question of the timber-trade with the existence of the colonies, so that he may have an opportunity of mani-

festing his opinion respecting a science of which he evidently is entirely ignorant. Whether political economy be or be not composed of ill-digested hypotheses,—whether the colonies ought or ought not to be retained, however, has nothing to do with the present matter. Granting both these assumptions, the questions still recur—is the timber-trade beneficial to the colonies, and is Sir Howard capable of answering that question? It may be presumed that what he has advanced by way of argument and fact must determine the ex-governor's capacity—it is not his opinion of political economy, his feeling respecting the advantage of colonial possessions, that is to settle the question. If this be granted, some important consequences follow, of which not the least remarkable is, that nearly two-thirds of his pamphlet must be put aside, since quite two-thirds are occupied in the manifestation of these two opinions.

The main argument in favour of the timber-trade adduced by Sir Howard Douglas rests upon two assumptions:—1st. That, without the timber-trade the colonists would be unable to purchase our commodities; 2d. That the operation of lumbering is a necessary accompaniment to the labours of the farmer. It unfortunately happens for the reputation of Sir Howard, as respects his capability of judging of the interests of the colony he governed, that both these assumptions are glaringly erroneous.

Again, the gallant general has mixed together questions which are totally unconnected. It is absolutely requisite to point out this confusion; otherwise, we could not possibly arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. The trade in timber with the mother-country has no connexion with that carried on between the West Indies and our North-American colonies; yet Sir H. Douglas, for no purpose that I can perceive, excepting that of perplexing the reader, has jumbled together the consideration of both these distinct channels of commerce. The ministers, by altering the ratio of duties on American and Baltic timber, have declared no hostility to the trade maintained with the West Indies. They have done that trade no injury by this measure. Why, then, when professedly discussing the timber-trade, drag in the matter respecting the West Indies? Simply, to create confusion, and thereby to generate a vague feeling of alarm.

Sir Howard Douglas has, moreover, mingled together separate distinct portions of the question which he intended to treat. It is one thing to inquire what injury will be done to the colonies; it is another to inquire what will accrue to the mother-country. Unhappily, Sir Howard Douglas cannot keep these inquiries separate; he flies from one part of the subject to the other,—now advancing an assertion respecting the colonies, now

respecting Great Britain ; and, when we hope that he is about to throw light upon the application of capital in America, he commences an oration respecting British seamen. This conduct is either very disingenuous or very weak. If the gallant officer did not want to mystify the subject, he has been exceedingly unfortunate in his endeavours. However, I will attempt to bring his arguments and his facts into something like order. Premising, nevertheless, that, possibly, some mistake may arise as to the meaning of the gallant officer, for, led away by a desire to manifest fine writing, he has indulged in a cloud of words ; has used an involved, vicious, and, in many places, a totally unintelligible style.

“ The permanency,” he says, “ of the colonial connexion between Great Britain and the North-American provinces rests entirely on the manner in which their interests are dealt with by the British Parliament ; it is, therefore, of the greatest importance to consider what effects are likely to be produced upon the interests of those colonies by the proposed alteration in the duties on foreign and North-American timbers.” (p. 4.) This is allowed.

Next, he asserts “ that no alteration could be made in the ratio of duties, whether by raising those on British timber, or by lowering those on the foreign article, or in any way destroying the present scale without injuring or totally ruining the British North-American timber-trade. (p. 5.) This, for the present purpose, is also allowed.

After a long parade of reasoning, to prove the importance of the colonies, which importance is not in dispute, he asserts, at p. 13, that “ to abandon our present policy would be to lose our hold of the colonies altogether.” We are to lose our hold on the colonies because their interests are injured, and their interests are to be injured by the change in the trade. When we expect proof of this assertion, he proceeds from this page 13 to the end of his pamphlet to prove that the loss of the colonies would be injurious to Great Britain. He asserts, at various points, that the colonies will be injured, never attempting, however, the slightest particle of proof ; and then enters into long discussions to show, what no one called in question, viz. the injurious effects of a separation. I have gone carefully through his work, with the most sincere desire to find something which would bear upon the capability of the colonies to furnish other produce than timber : in other words, to learn from him how the colonists would be injured, but I must own, that I have found nothing beyond bare assertion, except the following passage, which is the assumption mentioned above, viz., that the operation of lumbering is a necessary accompaniment to the labours of the farmer. The passage is as follows :—“ The pursuits

of the emigrant are, it is true, essentially agricultural; but let it not be overlooked that agricultural operations, in a country covered with forests, must commence and be accompanied by the operations of the lumberer. The poor emigrant begins his labour with the axe, and his greatest, his chief resource in earning money, wherewith to buy what he wants, is in manufacturing shingles,* or staves, or felling timber." (p. 19.)

This passage, the only one containing a statement connected with the operations of the supposed change on the welfare of the colonists, struck me as containing an egregious blunder. To satisfy myself, I applied to a friend who has resided many years in Canada, and the following are the observations he sent me on the passage:—

" You know full well that I resided many years in Canada—that I was occupied while there in farming operations, and that few persons, from the various situations in which I was placed, had so many opportunities of judging of the people's pursuits, habits, and manners as myself. I have handled the axe and the plough; I have been initiated in the mysteries of lumbering, of squaring timber, splitting staves and shingles;—have dwelled in a shanty, and floated down the St. Lawrence on a raft; in short, I know something of these things and can fairly place my opinion, reaped from actual experience, against that of Sir H. Douglas. Now, I assert, and that boldly, that the man who wrote the passage you sent me, knows nothing of the matter about which he pretended to give an opinion.—I can make this clear to you. We will suppose an emigrant to be settled in his location of, say, one hundred acres. It is ten chances to one that these one hundred acres contain not one stick of timber fit for sale. Supposing, however, that they do contain some half dozen, and then imagine the aid the emigrant will receive in clearing his land by cutting down half a dozen trees out of some thousands. Besides, cutting down the timber is but a small part of the labour required. It must be squared, or split into staves, must be carried to the rivers, and floated down to the market. All this takes time, and, when the emigrant returns to his farm, he has not forwarded one step the clearing of his land. The truth is, the lumberer is a person totally distinct from a settler. The lumberer wanders over millions of acres in search of timber, and so far from aiding the real clearer, he seriously obstructs his operations. He leaves brushwood, tops of trees, &c.

* Shingles assuredly need not have been mentioned, since they cannot be affected by the timber-duties, seeing that they never are exported to Great Britain.

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lying about in disordered heaps, and, by making small gaps in the woods, permits brambles and underwood to spring up. The farmer never wishes to see the lumberer in his woods. And when Sir H. Douglas asserts that the operations of the lumberer must accompany those of the farmer, he proves at once, to my complete satisfaction, that his stay in New Brunswick has taught him little of the affairs of that country.

"He may, perhaps, say that the poor emigrant having no capital cannot go on his farm to commence clearing it; he must live while he is preparing the land for the reception of the crops, and that to get this money he turns lumberer. Let it be observed, however, that this does not clear his land, and that if it enables him afterwards to clear it, it is by putting him in possession of a small capital, not by performing the work. But the truth is, that many, most of the poor emigrants become agricultural labourers to the persons already settled, earning wherewith to enable them afterwards to settle for themselves; and if the capital now expended in paying the wages of lumbering men were directed to farming operations, the emigrant would derive a much greater benefit from that capital than he now does. The truth being, that an European emigrant is a very bad lumberer though a very good farm-servant. Chopping and squaring timber, &c. is an art which these poor men do not know, and they are, therefore, much less useful than the people of the country in such operations. One American is worth a dozen Irish labourers, and, consequently, a very small portion of the emigrants are ever employed as lumberers, and never to their own advantage. They are ruined in health and habits by this abominable trade. If, however, you ask them to plough, to dig, to reap, to sow, thresh, and mow, you ask them to do things with which they are conversant, and for the doing of which they will be well rewarded. This is felt and acted on at present, the chief employment of the newly arrived emigrant being to act as farm-servants to the farmers of the country. I think I need say no more in answer to this nonsense of Sir Howard Douglas."

Into the question of the agricultural capabilities of the North-American colonies, Sir Howard has not thought fit to enter; he, therefore, cannot be considered an authority respecting the mode in which capital may be employed. In one part of his pamphlet he makes an admission, however, which, had he given it serious attention, might have led him to doubt of the ruin of the colonies in consequence of the annihilation of the timber-trade. "The lands and waters of British North America contain inexhaustible supplies, just such as our West-India colonies require."--(p. 24.) At pre-

sent the West Indies are chiefly supplied by the United States, either directly or through the Canadas. These necessities might, if the capital of the country were applied to agriculture, be furnished by our colonies; and thus a new and advantageous application of capital is manifestly within the power of the colonists. Wheat, hemp, flax, and the supplies for the West-India market, might and would beneficially take the place of timber.

But it may be said, supposing this to be perfectly true, still there may be a ruinous loss in diverting capital from the one employment to the other, and thus the proposed measure will be a serious evil to the colonies. Whether this be true will depend upon the nature of the capital employed.

The capital employed in the timber-trade is either floating or fixed. The floating capital is composed of what is expended in the wages of labour, and axes, wedges, chains, and such instruments as are quickly destroyed. The fixed capital is composed of mills.* The first forms, by far, the largest portion of the whole. Timber consists of square timber, staves, and planks, boards, and deals. Planks, boards, and deals are alone connected with mills, and planks are never, boards seldom, imported into Great Britain. All square timber and staves are entirely produced by the hand; and a great part of the expense attendant on making planks and deals arises from the labour expended in getting the saw-logs out of the woods, conveying the logs to the mills, and the planks and deals, when cut, to the ships—all this is done by floating capital. But this floating capital is all ready at a moment's warning to be applied to agricultural pursuits. The stores that feed the lumberer are just as well fitted to feed the clearer and the farmer. The few simple instruments of the lumberer are all needed by the clearer, and the cattle and the horses used by the one are requisite for the other. The skill, too, of the lumberer would serve for the clearer.—A skill, be it observed, possessed by almost every native, and by no means lost or depreciated in value when applied to the operations requisite to prepare waste lands for the purposes of agriculture. As

* A large portion of the capital employed, it must be remembered, is American capital. The timber from the American shore is either smuggled in, or pays a small duty to the colonial custom-houses at Coteau du Lac and St John's, and is then confounded with that of the colonies. A very large quantity is thus annually sent to Great Britain. Thus those who lament the loss of British capital, and of a profitable means of applying it, should speak with some reservation, and honestly state the facts I have here pointed out. Unluckily, the persons who speak on the side opposed to the new measure, are not peculiarly scrupulous either to collect information or to state it correctly when they have it. To tell the *whole* truth, and nothing but the truth, would seem a canon of morality not acknowledged by them.

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far, then, as regards the floating capital no loss would arise in consequence of this new application of it. The relative proportion between the value of the fixed and floating capital employed in the trade may be gathered from the note below.*

As respects the fixed capital, it may be allowed, that some, though a very small loss, would be sustained.† The extent of this loss would, by no means, be so large as is usually imagined. The mills now employed in cutting deals, it is generally supposed, would be totally ruined, and the whole capital totally lost. This is an error. The increased agricultural produce, that would necessarily arise from the increase of the capital devoted to agriculture, would give employment to a larger number of flour-mills than now exist. The mills that hitherto cut deals would be converted into flour-mills, and that at an exceedingly small expense and little loss. The increased agriculture would call for a larger quantity of boards and scantlings for an extension of farm buildings, and of boards for lining vessels, and for other

* Value of exports from Canada and the lower ports.

Oak, 26,000 loads, at 50s.	£65,750
Pine, 331,000 " " 15s.	250,000
Other square woods, 50,000, at 20s.	50,000
Staves, sd. 20,000 gt. hd. at £32 per 1200.	64,000
Ditto, West India, 30,000 gt. hd. at £10 per 1200.	30,000
	£159,750
Deals, 18,000 gt. hd. at £7 per 120	
	£126,000

If we take from the value of the deals the value of the mere labour expended in bringing the logs to the mill, and the deals, when cut, to the ships, the value would be full two-thirds less. So that, the relative proportion of the fixed and floating capital would stand thus:—

Oak, pine, staves, &c.	£159,750
Two-thirds the value of deals	84,000

Floating capital £543,750

Annual product of fixed capital in deals 42,000

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† To consider coves fixed capital is incorrect. Money may have been given for them; but that does not convert them into capital. They are places naturally fitted for the purposes of keeping and landing timber; and by the timber-trade a value has been conferred on them. But by the new agricultural employment of capital, a value will be given to lands now valueless; thus, the worth of the coves will be amply compensated. The amount of capital in the country will neither be increased nor lessened, by the destruction of the utility of the coves. Whether the owners of the coves ought to receive compensation for their loss is a question deserving consideration. But it must be borne in mind, that the capital of the country is not diminished by their gain or loss in this particular.

purposes connected with the export of grain. And thus it becomes very doubtful, whether the property would at all be deteriorated. I am inclined to believe that, in a few years, the great improvement that would infallibly take place in the colonies, were they to become wholly agricultural, would greatly enhance the value of mill-property; and that the persons who, at present, make such doleful outcries on the prospective loss, would, eventually, receive an enormous benefit.

The quantity of capital now invested in mills, cutting deals, (and it must be remembered, that these alone will be affected,) is, also, usually overrated. The following appears to me to be a tolerably correct mode of estimating the quantity actually employed:—

The average quantity of deals, for the last four years, imported from Canada into Great Britain (as by Custom-house account) was 1,153,000 pieces. Of this, the mill of a large proprietor is said to have cut 30,000 pieces. But, lest this should be deemed an over-estimate, (the estimate, however, was made by the owner,) say, that the mill cut only 50,000. This mill cost £5,000; and, I believe, is considered to have been built at an exceedingly expensive rate, the proprietor being well known to be an expensive builder. But this number is the twenty-third part of the whole quantity imported from Canada; so that, supposing the other mills quite as expensively built, and cutting at the same rate, the whole sum of the capital employed in Canada in mills may be estimated at £115,000, that being equal to 5,000 multiplied by 23.

The lower ports, as they are termed, export altogether not quite half the quantity exported from Canada; however, to prevent cavilling, say half. The total of capital employed, in our North American colonies, in mills, cutting for exportation to Great Britain, would be thus:—

Canada	£115,000
Lower ports	57,500
Total.....	£172,500

I shall hereafter shew *that this capital does not much exceed the tenth part of the ANNUAL loss sustained by Great Britain, in consequence of the present trade.* But, as I have already stated, this capital would, in no case, be lost—it may be deteriorated, though I am inclined to believe that, in a very few years, it will actually be increased in value.

Now then, if we put aside this probable loss, small under any supposition, the measure proposed by His Majesty's Ministers, appears, as regards the colonies, one of unmixed

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good. If, in the affected language of Sir Howard Douglas, we view "this as a matter of policy of a very high order, and one which cannot be safely lowered to any consideration of a mere mercantile nature," as respects the colonies, it possesses every quality which is requisite in a legislative measure of the kind. It increases the productive power of the colonies at once, and prospectively; it allows their wealth to be increased in a manner which, by insuring thrifty and moral habits, will insure further production; and it directs the application of capital at once to the great object of clearing and settling the country. I may, without vaunt, safely challenge Sir Howard Douglas, or any other advocate of his cause, to falsify any one of these propositions.

2. EFFECT OF THE PROPOSED MEASURE ON THE SHIP-OWNERS.

Passing from the consideration of the measure as respects the colonies, the next point that comes for examination is, its effects on the shipping interest of this country.

To determine these effects, two points require to be settled; 1st. what is the number of ships employed?—2d. what is the number that will be thrown out of employment by this measure—we shall thus be enabled to determine the value of the shipping likely to be injured; and, also, afterwards to calculate, with tolerable correctness, the amount of mischief that will actually fall upon such portion as is absolutely excluded.

The average of the tonnage from Canada, for the United Kingdom, in the years 1828, 1829, 1830, was 202,902 tons; this, added to that of the lower ports, which is somewhat less than that from Canada, makes, altogether, 405,804. But it must be remembered that a ship makes two voyages, so that this tonnage must be divided by two, which makes, of tonnage employed, 202,902 tons. The average tonnage of the ships employed in this trade is 350 tons; this makes the number of ships about 580, and the crews, each ship having about twelve men, would amount to about 6960.

This calculation nearly coincides with the Custom-house returns of Canada, considering Canada one-half the trade. I have not those returns complete for 1830, but for the years 1828 and 1829 I have. In those years the quantity of tonnage, as will be seen by the note below,* gives an average equal to 1830.

* The tonnage in 1828 was 170,589—1829, was 225,717, and, in 1830, 206,152.

Years.	Vessels cleared out for Great Britain.	Crews.	Average of 2 Years.	
			Vessels.	Crews.
1828	617	7712	595	8845
1829	574	9909*		

But ships, upon an average, make two voyages, so that the ships and the crews actually employed are, ships 287, and crews 4422, and add a like number for the lower parts,† it will make, ships 595, crews 8845.

In spite of these data, open to every one, and capable of no dispute, Sir Howard Douglas boldly asserts that "the British tonnage trading to the British North-American provinces in the year 1828, was 400,841 tons, navigated by at least 25,000 seamen, which is nearly one-fifth of the whole foreign trade of the country." (p. 8.)

This is a specimen of the care usually employed by Sir Howard Douglas, and a good instance on which to ground our respect for his opinions. Surely he knew (certainly he ought to have known) that ships make two voyages a year, and that, consequently, the number of ships can only be gained by dividing the numbers of those clearing inwards or outwards by two: And he ought to have been careful, when mentioning the tonnage, entering and clearing out from the various ports of those countries, to have separated such as are employed in trading to and from the West Indies, and to and from the country ports, from those trading with Great Britain.

Our next inquiry is, what of this quantity will be thrown out of employment, supposing the timber trade annihilated?

Ships are employed in carrying ashes, corn, and timber. We must, however, subtract those employed in carrying ashes and corn, from the whole number, before we can learn what will be the consequences of the loss of the timber trade.

The average quantity of ashes per year is 45,000 barrels,

* This difference in the relative numbers of the crews is a curious circumstance, for which I am unable to account. Probably from an error at the Custom-house.

† By a Parliamentary return of 1827, which shews the quantity of timber, &c. imported into Great Britain from the lower ports, it would appear that the amount of shipping employed between the lower ports of North America and Great Britain does not exceed two-thirds of that employed between Canada and Great Britain. My estimate for the lower ports is, therefore, excessive.

2 Years.

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and a ship usually carries 1000 barrels, so that twenty-three ships, making two voyages, would be requisite to carry on the trade in ashes with Canada.

But corn and flour, and sundry small articles, employ about fifty ships; and if we consider the lower ports about twenty-five vessels for other purposes than timber, one hundred ships may be safely supposed to be occupied in trade unconnected with timber. Therefore, the employment of four hundred and ninety ships has now to be determined.

It must now be remembered that, to convey the timber from the Baltic, three-fourths of the ships now employed will be requisite, and those three-fourths, for the reasons I shall advance immediately, I assert will be furnished by Great Britain. If this be correct, the employment of one hundred and twenty-two ships will alone now have to be accounted for.

The greater part of these will find employment:—first, in carrying the increased agricultural produce of the colonies; and, secondly, in the increased timber-trade from the Baltic; and, owing to the late decrease in the coal-duty in the increased coal-trade, it has been asserted that the timber vessels were too large for the coal-trade; those who make the assertion should take the trouble of looking at the tonnage of the vessels leaving Canada with timber, and they will find that a great many of them do not exceed two hundred and fifty tons;—that tonnage is certainly not too large for a collier; but it is notorious that a large portion of the timber vessels are equally colliers, and the vessels carrying timber are frequently owned by the coal factors and merchants of London.

The evidence for these various propositions is as follows:—

1. The shipping required for the trade in the Baltic will be furnished by England.

It is usually asserted that we cannot compete now with the shipping of the Baltic trader; and from this assertion it is concluded, at once, that we shall be unable to do so when the new measure comes into operation. The truth of the matter is, however, that the assertion is itself unfounded, and the conclusion from it fallacious.

Every one engaged in the trade will at once allow that, in every portion of the carrying trade, excepting that of timber, at present existing from those ports of the Baltic in which competition is allowed, that the British vessels have almost entirely excluded foreigners: British vessels almost wholly carrying the wheat and other grain, hemp, tallow, and such damageable commodities as are exported from the Baltic; these articles, requiring a superior class of ships, which we can easily afford, and at a lower rate than the people of the

Baltic. As regards this portion of the carrying trade, I believe there is no dispute. It is, however, generally asserted, and sometimes believed, that the Baltic trader excludes us from the business of carrying timber. The following table will at once show the falsity of the assertion, by making manifest the gradual relative decrease of foreign shipping, and the gradual actual and relative increase of our own in that very trade.

LOADS OF TIMBER IMPORTED FROM THE BALTIC.*		
Year.	In British Ships.	In Foreign Ships.
1815	48,766	145,737
1816	36,176	43,709
1817	59,979	26,736
1818	82,959	58,926
1819	58,516	60,721
1820	43,453	22,388
1821	60,714	38,453
1822	76,118	61,130
1823	64,139	97,333
1824	77,183	118,711
1825	136,635	150,236
1826	90,614	65,464
1827	107,818	65,564

By this table it is apparent that, as soon as the war ended, we began to carry more of our own timber than was carried by foreigners, and that we maintained the same position until those years of enormous speculation 1823, 4, and 5, when, our shipping being otherwise employed, the ships of foreigners were again called upon to carry our timber. Their bad ships were capable of being used in this service, while our own were drawn into another channel. So soon as this rage for over-speculation was over, and things came again into their usual train, our ships again excluded those of the foreigners. How, after this experience, can any one say that we cannot compete with the Baltic trader? Yet, in spite of the document given above, Sir H. Douglas has the following passage.

* Parliamentary Paper, 1828.

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" Foreigners, particularly in the Baltic, build and sail their vessels vastly cheaper than that at which British vessels can be built and navigated. The average voyage from the north-eastern parts of England and Scotland to Norway, the Baltic, and back again, is from twenty-four to thirty days : whereas, the voyage to the North American Colonies and home again may be calculated at a hundred days, landing and discharging cargoes included.* The former are chiefly performed by foreigners in foreign ships, the latter entirely by British subjects in British vessels ; and if any alteration be made in the duties on foreign timber, compared with those on British timber—that is, if the modifications do not maintain the ratio of the present scale, the greater part of the timber-trade will pass into the hands of foreigners." (p. 15).

The last assertion rests entirely on that which he has before advanced, viz., that the chief part of the voyages to the Baltic are performed by foreigners—and this last assertion is made in defiance of the papers furnished to Parliament on the subject. I must, in courtesy, suppose Sir Howard Douglas to have been ignorant of those papers ; but being so, was it not, to say the least, exceedingly ill-judged of the gallant officer to hazard, upon imperfect evidence, so important a proposition ? The whole evidence was open to him, as to every body else, so that his ignorance argues a temerity in assertion, which necessarily destroys any little authority which might otherwise be given to his conclusions.

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At the commencement of the peace, the Northern Nations had a large number of vessels, which had been called into existence by the wants of this country—the carrying trade was almost entirely in their hands. For some years these vessels allowed the people of the Baltic to continue partially to compete with us. As the vessels, however, gradually decayed, the Baltic traders have gradually been obliged to yield to our superior skill in the building and the navigation of vessels. Thus, even in the present course of affairs, we should eventually have usurped the trade. Under the new arrangement, however, the same result will be more rapidly attained.

When the new act comes into operation, a large number of our vessels being no longer used in the American trade will seek for new employment. A great demand for shipping in the Baltic trade will simultaneously arise. The people of the Baltic have no ships to supply this new demand, so that

* In Sir Howard Douglas's opinion a long voyage seems a benefit. Would it not be advisable for the shipping interest to petition Parliament, that all timber-ships coming from North America should, before being admitted into the British ports, be compelled to sail round the island of St. Helena?

ours will necessarily be required. The great demand of ships in the Baltic trade, were there none but Baltic ships (that is, the present number of Baltic ships) to answer the demand, would cause a rise in freight. This of itself would at once bring the British shipping into the trade. The people of the Baltic are not rich, and, therefore, they can make no immediate and extensive application of capital to the building of ships; in other words, they will be unable to supply the new demand. But we can at once supply it, and to any reasonable man there will appear no doubt but that we shall supply it—that is, our ships will at once be employed in carrying timber from the Baltic. That the people of the Baltic have not, and cannot quickly erect, a new and large timber marine is certain—that we shall have at our disposal more than sufficient ships is also certain, and is usually bewailed. That we shall require a large quantity of timber from the Baltic is also assured; that, consequently, a larger number of ships will be required to carry it cannot be denied. Since, then, we have the means of carrying it, and the people of the Baltic have not, is it not beyond the shadow of a doubt that we shall be employed in carrying the timber? The assertion rests almost upon demonstration.

This refers to the immediate employment of such shipping as is thrown out of the American trade. If we look to the future, the prospect is still more certain. Even under our present disadvantages, we have been able, successfully, to compete with the foreigner. But now our situation will be materially altered,—we shall still retain all our skill, but we shall have cheaper and better timber,—the less outlay necessary then for a ship, and the longer continuance of the ship, when built, will allow the English ship-owner to sail for less freight than before. Thus, for the future, our success will be certain.

Our skill now has permitted us to compete, in all cases, with the foreigner: we shall, hereafter, at once have a host of old ships to compete with him; and, in future, we shall have cheap timber to build new ones. This again will enable us to get cordage, turpentine, tar, &c. cheaper, (freight being a very large component part of the price of these articles); and thus, being placed upon an equality with the foreigner in every thing in which he has hitherto had a superiority,—and, besides, retaining our superior skill, there can be no fear but that we shall not only, at once, have the carrying trade, but certainly we shall also retain it.

Timber-ships are the old ships which have ceased to be of use in the various other trades, and the 500, usually employed, are naught but the refuse of about 23,000 sail of vessels. The price of these old vessels has hitherto been

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regulated by the rate of freights in the timber-trade; and when it is found that these freights must fall, if such should be the case, the sum given will be less, and the British ships will even, in this way, be enabled to compete with the Baltic trader. This, however, will do no injury to the possessors of such ships as eventually are sold for timber-ships. The mode in which the matter will be settled may be thus explained. A West-India trader, for example, having built a ship worth, say £10,000, when calculating his freights to learn what will pay him for the outlay of his capital, is accustomed to take into consideration the sum he may eventually get for his ship, when useless as a West-India ship, from persons who will purchase her to carry timber. The rate of freights now obtained in this last trade enables the buyer usually to give between £1500 and £3000 for a vessel, and to repay him he demands this freight. Suppose, however, that it is now discovered that freights in timber must fall, the price of these old ships must also fall, (and it must be remembered, that a large portion become useless and are supplied every year,) the person building the West-India ship will not calculate on the sum usually given, and will regulate his freights accordingly. The effect, however, upon West-India and other freights, will be scarcely perceived, since the difference of the sum now given, and that which will be given for old ships, will be so small, when compared with the prime cost of the vessel, that it will hardly be noticed. Besides, the West-India builder now building with a cheaper and superior commodity, will be enabled still to charge only the usual freight, and may yet afford to gain less by eventually selling his vessel for the timber-trade. Those ships which have some years to run, and have yet to be repaired, will be repaired at so much smaller a cost, in consequence of the timber being cheaper and better, and the other articles also required, such as tar, hemp, &c. being also cheaper, in consequence of the lowering of the expenses, that the owners will be able, without loss, to sell them for less; and thus again our old ships will be allowed, even should the freights be lower than at present, to compete with foreigners.

Thus, I think, it may be fairly concluded that the timber-ships required in the increased Baltic trade will be supplied by Great Britain.

There yet remain, however, 122 ships still to be accounted for.

As hath already appeared, the colonies must, necessarily, produce more agricultural produce than they now produce. There can be little doubt that the capital of the country, when applied to the purposes of agriculture, will produce as much or more than they now furnish. But what they now furnish

has been shown to employ seventy-five vessels; so that, under this supposition, forty-seven vessels now alone remain unemployed. These forty-seven will be the worst; they will not be worth more than £60,000; and, were they at once destroyed, no great harm would arise. But such will not be the result. There will, in consequence of the lowering the duties on coals, be an increased demand for ships in that trade, which will at least occupy the small number of forty-seven. But the number will, in fact, be much smaller, for the capital of the colonies now applied to furnish agricultural produce for exportation to the United Kingdom, is not equal to that employed in the timber-trade. This every one allows; and one of the great outcries, as regards the colonies, is, that by far the largest portion of their capital will be unemployed if no longer useful in getting out timber. By this it is evident that more than seventy-five ships will be employed in the new trade; in truth, above a hundred will be required, so that no loss whatever would accrue, even supposing no increased demand for the coal-trade.

If, however, we were to consider that the greater number of the old ships now employed in the timber-trade were at once destroyed or thrown out of employment, the consequence would be utterly insignificant when the whole shipping of Great Britain, and its value, are taken into consideration. From the outcry raised about the timber-trade, people usually conceive that a very large portion of the British commercial shipping is employed therein. The following statement will show the relative importance of this branch of trade:—

The Number of Ships, and Tonnage thereof, belonging to the several Ports of the British Empire.

Years.	Ships.	Tonnage.
1824	24,776	2,559,587
1825	24,280	2,553,682
1826	24,625	2,635,644
1827*	23,199	2,460,500

With Canada, in 1829, the whole number of ships employed to and from Great Britain was only 287, and the tonnage 106,275. Multiply this by 2, and the amount will be the number employed in the colonies under consideration.

But it is said, let us not look at this measure merely as one

* The apparent falling off arose from a new registry in 1827, by which it was found that many vessels, previously reckoned, had long ceased to exist.

of money—what will become of our seamen; and on this Sir Howard Douglas advances the following astounding assertion.

“ Even were British ships to become the carriers of timber from those countries, (*i. e.* of the Baltic,) that trade would not be found so good a nursery for seamen for the British navy as those formed in the North-American trade, the hardy and healthy character of which, and the duration of its voyages, are known to form the best seamen in the world.” (p. 10.)

Every sailor will at once acknowledge this to be a most preposterous statement. The best sailors of Great Britain are formed in the coal-trade—a collier is proverbially a first-rate seaman. The voyages to the Baltic require skill, courage, and hardihood equal to any trade in the world. The navigation is intricate, the weather often stormy, and those incidents which exercise a seaman’s skill and put his courage and coolness to the test are constantly recurring. This one respecting seamen is another of those assertions which, to unbiassed minds, at once prove Sir Howard Douglas either to be speaking of what he is totally ignorant or to be acting the part of a somewhat disingenuous advocate.

Thus, then, as regards the shipping-interest of this country, the proposed measure will, while it produces no immediate evil, confer a great and lasting benefit for the future; it will injure no present interest, but, by giving the British builder and the British ship-owner a superiority which they have not hitherto enjoyed, allow us, hereafter, to compete with every rival, under advantages that will defy all opposition.

3. EFFECTS OF THE MEASURE AS REGARDS GREAT BRITAIN.

Hitherto our inquiries have been impeded by doubts resulting from narrow interests, supposed to be at variance with the general welfare; and the conclusions to which those inquiries have led will, doubtless, meet with opposition, no matter how correct the arguments,—how cogent the statements,—upon which they have been founded. Now, however, a portion of the subject comes to be considered which almost entirely precludes a doubt. And the results of our investigations on this important branch of the question ought to silence all hostility to the proposed measure, so enormous, so indisputable is the benefit to be derived from it.

The benefit to this country will accrue in two different shapes,—one connected with the saving of expense in the article of timber,—the other with the new channels that will be opened to our manufactures.

The expense will be saved in the price and the quality of the timber; and the following table will show, to a certain degree, the amount annually saved.

*Amount of Duty paid on Timber, Deals, and other Articles of Wood from British North America.**

Years.	Sums paid.	Sums that would have been paid had the Timber been imported from the Baltic.
	£	£
1824	218,117	1,444,140
1825	244,868	1,655,947
1826	241,045	1,519,636
1827	213,749	1,251,922

The loss, as here supposed, would, upon an average, amount to a million and a half annually. But this is too great, since that supposes the price of the article to be raised. If, however, we suppose the price to remain the same, and the timber to be imported from the Baltic, the less cost of that timber would allow the country to levy a much larger duty than at present; in fact, it would permit us to levy a duty exactly equal to the difference between the price of American and Baltic timber.

This saving, added to the saving that would also arise from the superior quality of the Baltic wood, would give the whole amount gained by the country. This difference of quality has been proved, and is now allowed to be one-third in favour of the Baltic timber; and the following statement, made in the Westminster Review, upon an average of the years 1824 and 25, is true at the present time, the importation prices and quality remaining nearly the same.

Loss on Account of the inferior Quality of the Colonial Timber, and greater Price of the same.

OAK.

Average amount of oak imported into Great Britain from the American colonies, in the years 1824, 1825 :—

* Parliamentary Paper for 1828.

Loads, 14,902, at the average price of £8 : 10 per load, exclusive of duty, making the sum of .. £126,667

One-third of which is 42,222

The average price of Dantzic plank, for the same years, was £7, exclusive of duty; taking the load of plank to be equal in value to a load of timber, a great admission on our part, the community lost on every load bought of the colonies, £1 : 10; making on the whole of the oak imported a loss of 22,352

This, added to the above loss, on account of quality, makes a loss on the oak alone, of 64,575

PINE.

Average of the two years 1824, 1825, of the amount of pine timber imported into Great Britain, from the American colonies:—

Loads 358,450. One-third of which would have been used for the purposes above-mentioned, and, therefore, no loss is to be calculated on that third: the two-thirds remaining will be 238,634 loads, at the average price of £4, duty excluded, making the sum of 954,536

One-third of which is 318,178

The average price of Memel fir, duty excluded, was £2 : 15, thus the community lost on every load of timber bought of the colonies, the sum of £1 : 5, making upon two-thirds of the whole quantity bought, the sum of..... 298,292

Which, added to the above loss, on account of inferior quality, makes a loss to the community of..... 616,470

STAVES.

The average importation of staves from the colonies, of the years 1824, 1825, was about equal to 2,000,000 of pipe-staves, the average price per 1000, duty excluded, was £81, making, upon the whole importation, the sum of 162,000

One-third of which is 54,000

The average price of Memel staves, duty excluded, was per 1000, £68. Thus we lost on every 1000 staves purchased from the colonies, £13;

making, upon the whole quantity purchased, the sum of	26,000
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Which, added to the above loss by inferior quality, makes a loss by staves, of*	80,000
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DEALS.

The average quantity of colonial deals imported into Great Britain of the years 1824, 1825, was 12,146, on which duty was paid as three inches thick. The average price for the best sort of Quebec deals was, per 100, £25, duty ex- cluded, making, on the above quantity, the sum of	303,650
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One-third of which is	101,216
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The average price of Christiana deals,† per 100, was £18, making a loss upon every 100 bought of the colonies, the sum of £7, which, upon the whole importation, makes a sum of	85,022
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This, added to the above loss, on account of quali- ty, makes	186,238
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The several losses are as follow:—

Loss by oak	64,575
— by pine	616,470
— by staves	80,000
— by deals.....	186,238

Making a total loss, per annum, by the timber- trade with the colonies, of‡	947,283
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This, assuredly, is a benefit which to forego requires some inducement beyond the fear of a trifling loss to a Canadian ship-owner, or the paltry possible injury to a few useless rotten ships.

* It ought to be remarked that the price of staves and oak here mentioned is somewhat higher than at present. But the quantity, of late years, has exceeded the importations of 1824-5; so that the over-statement in price will be balanced by the under-statement in quantity.

† It must be remembered that Christiana deals are superior to any that come into the market, and, consequently, bear a higher price; had we chosen any other country's deals, our loss would have appeared still greater.

‡ When it is recollected that battens, heading, and every sort of timber, except pine and oak, have been omitted, it will be perceived that a million falls short of the actual loss.

On the subject of the new channels of commerce, the results will appear equally satisfactory.

At present, the countries in the Baltic which could supply timber, furnish, in place of that timber, no other article to this country. There is, as regards them, to the extent of the capital employed in timber, no market for our commodities. If, however, we enable them to sell us timber, if we thus give them a purchasing power, we, to the exact amount of capital expended in timber, create a new market for our manufactured goods. The countries which will mutually furnish this timber, it must be borne in mind, do not, at present, buy our manufactured produce, and for this very obvious reason, they have nothing to offer in return. If, by the new act, we give them this power, we call into existence a new market.

On the other hand, as I have already shewn, the purchasing power of the American colonies will not be diminished. That it will be diminished is usually assumed, but never proved; here, as elsewhere, the opponents of a free timber-trade deal in bold, general, and unsupported assertions. In order to controvert my position, however, a position grounded on the experience of men long conversant with the country, something more is required than these sweeping and hardy statements; and I solicit, openly and fearlessly, refutation as to the various particulars I have adduced. Until this refutation arrive, I feel justified in asserting that the purchasing power of our colonies will remain the same in spite of the prophetic declamation of the opponents of the proposed measure.

But, says Sir Howard Douglas, "The amount of British manufactures consumed in the timber countries of the north of Europe is trifling, when compared with those consumed in the British provinces, and for which they have little else to pay than timber. If even the people in those countries had the means, and they probably never will have, of consuming as much of British manufactured articles as the people of the British colonies do, their own habits, as well as the policy of their respective governments, forbid the hope that they would consume British goods to an extent which would warrant a preference being given to the foreign trade. Their timber will be chiefly paid for in money." (p. 17.)

Now the reason why the northern countries have not bought our goods is, as before stated, that they *could* not do so; and, assuredly, it is strange to draw a conclusion respecting their future purchases from the past time, when they were totally unable to purchase. We are about to give them a means—we are going to create a purchasing power, and then

we are told that no purchases will follow, because, when they were unable, they did not purchase.

But there is a still more dreadful evil yet behind. The people of the Baltic will take nothing but money. The people of the Baltic, it is to be supposed, use money as other people do,—to purchase commodities; I presume they do not eat it, or wear it, or sleep in it; but, if they buy commodities, is it not notorious that we can compete with every people on the face of the globe in the manufacture of almost all commodities,—or, rather, reversing the expression, no people on earth can compete with us? This, then, is an inducement for the Baltic trader to buy of us. Where will he get his linens, cottons, woollens, and hardware, so cheap and so good as from the English market? Is it, then, probable that he will go to any other? Will he not, as the North-American colonists have done, purchase our goods with the timber he has manufactured, and thus obtain, at a cheap rate, goods that he could not otherwise acquire?

But it may be asked, how comes it that, though the Baltic trader gains a purchasing power, which he had not before, the American colonist loses none? Why is not the colonist to be placed in the situation of the Baltic trader previous to the new act? Simply, because the capabilities of the countries are different; and it is to be hoped that our conduct with respect to them will be different also. The countries of the Baltic from which the timber comes are poor in agricultural capability; and, even were they the most capable in the world, we have excluded their produce. But this is not the case with our colonies; they are fertile above most other countries, and their produce has been wisely admitted.* Thus, we do not destroy their purchasing power, while we create one for the Baltic.

What is the meaning of the assertion, which states that the people of the northern countries will never have the means of purchasing as much manufactured goods as the colonies? It is asserted that they will furnish the whole of the timber required, and is not this the power to purchase? How can it be stated that the trade with the colonies will be annihilated because the northern countries will furnish all the timber; and, at the next moment, asserted that they will have no power to purchase? Here, as so often before, it appears

* The landlords of England need not be alarmed at the prospect of receiving colonial wheat. The colonies have not yet been able to furnish, annually, more than the consumption of three days for this country; and, in future, they will hardly be able to double this quantity; and of this the whole will not be imported here, since much will be sent to the West Indies and other parts.

that Sir Howard Douglas had extremely confused and incorrect notions respecting commerce, or that he was desirous of mistifying his readers. If the latter were his real object, he deserves congratulation on his success.

As to the lamentations respecting the hindrance to emigration, it need only be stated that the ships still required will be able to carry out annually 50,000 persons, a number far exceeding any that have hitherto emigrated.

I cannot close my observations on this matter without two suggestions to the ministers, as to their proposed measure. The one is, that the duty be lowered on Baltic timber to thirty instead of fifty shillings. Through this, there will, in consequence of the great lowering of price, be a great increased consumption, a greatly increased demand for shipping, an increased revenue, and a great improvement in many of the comforts of the people. The other is, that the alteration of the duty be not carried into execution until all the ships, leaving the colonies this year, have arrived, and discharged their cargoes. If the bill were made to come into operation on the 1st of March next,—this would be effected. By this means no injury will be done to those persons who have made engagements for the coming year, and a fair warning will be given for the future. Justice absolutely requires that this suggestion should be adopted.

Thus, after having carefully gone through the various points connected with this subject, to me it appears that the following statements may safely be hazarded.

1.—That little loss in any shape will be suffered by individuals in the colonies, while much actual and perspective benefit will be conferred on them as a body by the present measure.

2.—That the shipping interest will receive no injury, as an interest, even should it be allowed that the possessors of a few, and nearly useless, ships should suffer. That great and lasting service will be rendered to the shipping of the country generally, in consequence of the superior quality, and lower price of the wood to be hereafter employed in their construction.

3.—And that the good about to be derived from the measure, by the community, is so large that it ought to bear down all opposition, and render it almost criminal for some small particular consideration to oppose the progress of the bill.

I have abstained throughout from entertaining the general question of the propriety or justice of placing the interest of the ship-owner in opposition to that of the public, and making paramount that of the former. It might have been shewn that cheap productions are beneficial to the com-

munity, and that a trade which creates a dear commodity is an evil, that the increase of ships, in consequence not of increased demand for commodities, but from increased carriage, is an injury and not a good; and thus, that the very arguments which are adduced to support the propositions of the ship-owners are the strongest that could be adduced against them. But this line of argument was not necessary. It is evident that the shipping of this country will not be diminished,—that it will be maintained, not by any artificial and injurious supports, but through the increased demand of an advantageous trade. And thus that no injury will be suffered by them, while an enormous good will accrue to the community.

THE END.

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